

DESAFIOS DO ENSINO SUPERIOR EM TEMPOS DE PANDEMIA: RELATO DE EXPERIÊNCIA DOS CURSOS DE GRADUAÇÃO A DISTÂNCIA DA UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO TOCANTINS, BRASIL.

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Abstract

In Brazil, during the COVID-19 pandemic higher education was largely affected. Of the 69 public universities in the country, 54 suspended classes adding up to more than 870 thousand students with stopped studies. However, many universities that offer distance learning courses have not suspended classes on these courses, as is the case at the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT). After ninety days of social isolation, the pedagogical coordination of the Directorate of Educational Technology at UFT, in monitoring the virtual rooms, noticed an “absence” even if virtual of the student of the distance modality - whether in the lack of delivery of activities in the virtual environment of Moodle learning, as well as dropping access to it. In view of this finding, the pedagogical team prepared a Survey of Information form on the conditions of students in UFT undergraduate courses, and their family groups, during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The form was sent by email to the 954 students enrolled in the UFT distance learning courses, almost 200 of which were answered. The results show that financial, emotional and social problems affected students' academic performance during the semester in which social isolation occurred. Problems with internet access and adequate equipment for the study was also an important fact, considering that the classroom support centers were closed and many students (18%) access the internet only on their cell phone. After the diagnosis, the pedagogical team developed strategies to assist students with pedagogical and psychological difficulties, in addition to guiding teachers to extend the deadlines for sending activities and to participate more effectively in Moodle (social presence) attending to students' doubts at this time delicate, avoiding the avoidance of courses.

Keywords: Higher education, distance learning, pandemic, academic performance, dropout.